Subject: Hoard of Roman bronze coins--
how to clean

Switzer, H.S.
[Beaumont, TX]

1924

WM. SCHNICK, PRESIDENT G. B. WATKINS, VICE-PRESIDENT H. S. SWITZER, SEC'Y-TREAS.

BEAUMONT BAKERY CO.

MANUFACTURERS OF

BUTTER-NUT AND BUTTER-KRUST

BREAD

BEAUMONT, TEXAS

350 COLLEGE ST.

March 29, 1924.

Mr. Howland Wood,
New York, N. Y.,

Dear Sir:-

I have recently acquired a large hoard of Roman bronze coins. The condition of these coins are "as found", which is not very good unless they can be cleaned. I have had no experience whatever with ancients and I want to know if they can be cleaned.

I am sending you herewith a representative specimen and will certainly appreciate any information you can give me as to how this may be done, if it is possible. Some of these coins are also encrusted with a hard, yellowish clay or earth.

Assuring you that any advice you may be able to give me on this subject will be gratefully received, I am,

Yours very truly,

H. S. Switzer

April 3rd, 1924

Mr. H. S. Switzer
Beaumont Bakery Co.
Beaumont, Texas

Dear Sir:

Replying to your favour of March 29th, there are a number of ways to clean old coins corroded as yours appear to be. Few processes work perfectly but some methods are superior to others. I suggest the following -

A solution of potassium cyanide and ammonium hydroxide. The strength of these two chemicals depends on your coins, and also the proportions. I suggest that you experiment and try the cyanide from one-third to two-thirds.

Another solution is 70 grammes of caustic soda, 180 grammes potassium sodium tartrate, dissolved in 400 cc. water; then make up to 500 cc. Sometimes carbonate of soda will work. And sometimes you can add a drop of acetic acid to it.

Very truly yours,

Curator

Enc. return of coin